

EXHIBIT B

Comments

Subscribe
Starting at 99 cents

Members
Sign In

Assault case has elite St. Paul's examining school's culture



SUZANNE KREITER/GLOBE STAFF

News of the allegation has left students horrified and questioning its spring rite.

By **Evan Allen** | GLOBE STAFF AUGUST 08, 2014

CONCORD, N.H. — Students call it an end-of-the-year tradition at the elite St. Paul's School: Graduating seniors seek to hook up with younger classmates before departing the bucolic boarding school for college.

But two days before this year's graduation, authorities say, the spring dating rite known as the Senior Salute took a darker turn. An 18-year-old senior, Owen Labrie,

2 of 5 free articles. [Subscribe now](#)

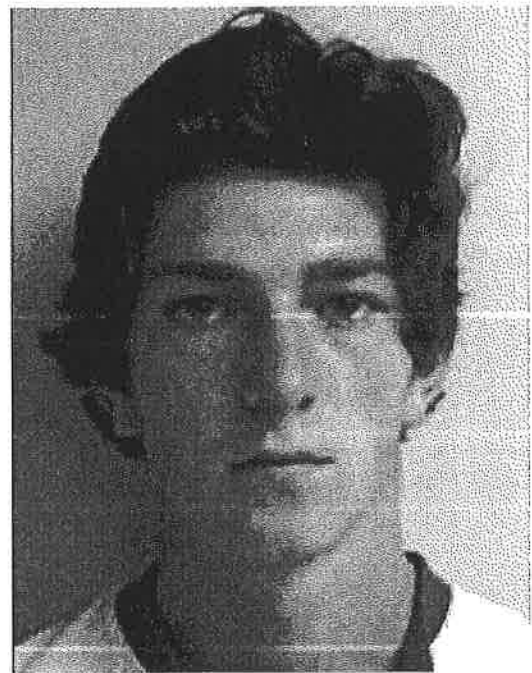
as she pleaded “no.”

Comments

Investigators say Labrie may have been in a competition with friends to see how many conquests each could chalk up.

News of the alleged assault — and the tradition that underlies it — has shocked and horrified students and alumni at St. Paul’s, set amid 2,000 acres of woodland and meadow. For them, the Episcopal high school founded in 1856 offers not just an education, but a home and family.

“St. Paul’s is the best thing that ever happened to me; it changed my life,” said Jessie Dalman, 18, who graduated with Labrie but declined to discuss the allegations against him. “It’s just a difficult time for the whole community.”



Owen Labrie, 18, is charged with sexually assaulting a 15-year-old student at the elite St. Paul’s School in Concord, N.H., during a spring dating ritual known as Senior Salute.

St. Paul’s grad charged with assault

In a letter to ^{Comments} St. Paul's parents in July, Rector Michael Hirschfeld called the allegations disturbing and vowed to review school's policies, practices, and procedures, as well as its culture. "I am determined to learn if this alleged violation is an aberration or represents a broader issue," Hirschfeld wrote. "This is as much a question about the nature and quality of relationships our students have with one another as it is about upholding basic standards of respect."

RELATED: St. Paul's grad charged with sexually assaulting student

A spokesman for the school, whose graduates include Secretary of State John F. Kerry and "Doonesbury" creator Garry Trudeau, and where tuition exceeds \$50,000, said last week on that neither he nor Hirschfeld would comment beyond the letter.

St. Paul's is cooperating fully in the investigation, according to Concord police.

The allegations are likely to prompt soul-searching at a school that views itself as having a responsibility to create a "good and just elite," said Shamus Khan, an 1996 alumnus who later returned to teach and who wrote "Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul's School."

But, he said, while sexual assault is horrifying wherever it occurs, it is not a problem unique to St. Paul's.

"I'm not surprised by it, to be honest," said Khan, now a sociology professor at Columbia University. "But I wouldn't be that surprised by it at any college or high school."

Labrie, of Turnbridge, Vt., was arrested July 16 on seven charges, including three counts of aggravated felonious sexual assault. He was released on \$15,000 bail and is scheduled to be arraigned in Concord in September.

Labrie's attorney, James Moir, said his client was a scholarship student at St. Paul's who was well loved and well respected on campus. "He does not come from a

upon his character and ability.”

Comments

Moir said he could not directly respond to the affidavit, but said it is important to bear in mind that the allegations concern young men and young women in a sheltered environment. “I just know that there’s a lot more information out there regarding this case which casts a different light on things,” he said. He declined to elaborate.

According to a police affidavit, Labrie sent the 15-year-old girl a Senior Salute invitation via e-mail two days before the alleged assault, but she declined. Labrie then asked a freshman boy to “put in a good word” for him, according to the affidavit, and the girl then agreed to see him.

She believed that she and Labrie would be “kissing or making out and ‘that’s all,’ ” according to the affidavit.

On May 30, Labrie took her to a secluded area of a campus building typically used by maintenance, where they began kissing, according to the affidavit. But the girl told investigators that Labrie was “fast” and “kind of aggressive,” and began trying to remove her underwear.

She resisted and said “no” at least twice, but, she told police, Labrie sexually assaulted her. A nurse later found a laceration consistent with sexual assault, according to the affidavit.

Labrie later allegedly asked the girl via Facebook whether she was on birth control, and told her he had used a condom. According to the affidavit, he wrote to her that “for so many reasons we need to make sure people don’t think the wrong thing considering we never had sex. . . . I have to trust you’ve got my back and you make sure the right people know what’s actually up.”

Labrie denied to police that he sexually assaulted the girl, according to the affidavit.

But Labrie allegedly told the freshman boy who had put in the good word for him that they had sex, according to the affidavit, and that he knew what he did was illegal because the girl was too young. A counselor on campus reported the alleged assault to police after the victim's mother told her about it, the affidavit said.

Labrie was a prefect in his dorm and had received training in statutory rape and consensual sex, the affidavit said.

Labrie had been accepted to Harvard, said Moir. Harvard spokesman Colin Manning declined to discuss specific applicants but said admission can be withdrawn for several reasons, including "behavior that brings into question . . . honesty, maturity, or moral character."

One current student described the school's sexual culture as "really casual." The Senior Salute is a way for seniors to go after their "dark horse" — a classmate they liked but never connected with, said the student, who spoke on condition of anonymity because, the student said, St. Paul's has asked the community not to discuss the case publicly.

The school spokesman, Michael Matros, said students have not been prohibited from speaking but have been reminded that the issue is "a matter for the court system."

The student did not believe the culture of the school had anything to do with the alleged assault. "I think this was just a couple senior guys who thought they were much cooler than they actually were, trying to make a name for themselves and be legends, and it got out of hand," said the student.

But Carolyn Forrester, who graduated from St. Paul's in 2011, said in an e-mail that much of what led up to the alleged assault — the reported contest, the assumption that in the end the girl would come around, the search for social validation — was "business as usual" in the sexual culture on campus. "This incident felt both out of the blue and like it had been waiting to happen for a long time," she said.

She said that ^{Comments} much of the social hierarchy at the school, which began admitting girls in 1971, is controlled by boys, and one way girls established themselves was by hooking up with older guys. Many sexual encounters were based on power differentials, she said, and did not go as far as assault but “easily could have.”

“I think that’s what high school, and a lot of college, sexual encounters look like,” Forrester said. “I think [St. Paul’s] was a unique place with unique rules, but the problems aren’t unique to [St. Paul’s].”

A culture of hooking up — usually shorthand slang for casual sex — among high school students who may lack the maturity to discuss consent, and are often responding to peer pressure, is a “breeding ground for nonconsensual sexual activity,” said Toni K. Troop, spokeswoman for Jane Doe Inc., a statewide sexual assault and domestic violence advocacy group.

And sexual violence, she said, knows no geographic, economic, or intellectual boundaries. “Sexual violence on high school and college campuses and among young people is an epidemic,” she said. “Unless we start to address it like the public health crisis it is, we are just going to hear more and more stories like this.”

More coverage:

- 5/2014: Williams College roiled by report of rape
- 5/2014: Students’ efforts put campus sex assaults into spotlight
- 11/2013: Steubenville, Ohio school superintendent charged in rape case inquiry
- 9/2013: Hazing allegations continue at summer athletic camps
- 9/2013: Somerville athletes alleged to use broomstick in assault
- 2005: Deal approved in Milton Academy sex case

More from today's paper

- As Mark Webber seeks a pardon, some aren't ready to forgive